

**Draft Summary of the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group Meeting  
Oroville Facilities Relicensing (FERC Project No. 2100)  
February 28, 2002**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted a meeting for the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group on February 28, 2002 in Oroville.

A summary of the discussion, decisions made, and action items are provided below. This summary is not intended to be a transcript, analysis of the meeting, or to indicate agreement or disagreement with any of the items summarized, except where expressly stated. The intent is to present a summary for interested parties who could not attend the meeting. The following are attachments to this summary:

Attachment 1	Meeting Agenda
Attachment 2	Meeting Attendees
Attachment 3	Flip Chart Notes
Attachment 4	Interim Projects Presentation
Attachment 5	Oroville Facilities Relicensing – Regulations, Agencies, Definitions and Acronyms
Attachment 6	Conceptual Framework for Study Plans 18 and 19
Attachment 7	Study 1: Public and Private Vehicular Access
Attachment 8	Study 2: Recreation Safety Assessment
Attachment 9	Study 6: ADA Accessibility Assessment
Attachment 10	Study 8: Carrying Capacity
Attachment 11	Study 9: Existing Recreation Use Study
Attachment 12	Study 11: Recreation and Public Use Impact Assessment
Attachment 13	Study 13: Recreation Surveys
Attachment 14	Study 19: Fiscal Impacts
Attachment 15	2002 Meeting Schedule

## **Introduction**

Attendees were welcomed to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group meeting. Attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations and the desired outcomes of the meeting were discussed. The meeting agenda and list of meeting attendees are appended to this summary as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively. Meeting flip chart notes are included as Attachment 3.

## **Action Items – January 30, 2002 Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group Meeting**

A summary of the January 30, 2002 Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group meeting is posted on the relicensing web site. The Facilitator reviewed the status of action items from that meeting as follows:

<b>Action Item #R41:</b>	Distribute Interim Projects Presentation from Plenary Meeting to Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group (electronically and/or by fax). This presentation was presented to the Plenary Group on December 11, 2001.
Status:	The Facilitator distributed the Interim Projects presentation to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group (see Attachment 4).
<b>Action Item #R42:</b>	Confirm the FERC definition of a recreation-visitor-day.
Status:	This item was discussed in the context of the review of SP-R9 and SP-R13. John Baas (EDAW) indicated that FERC Form 80 uses the term "recreation day", which is defined as a visit to a site for any portion of a day. See the discussion on SP-R9 for further details.
<b>Action Item #R43:</b>	Hold sub-Task Force meeting to finalize the sampling approach for the recreation surveys, including the identification of the appropriate activities (or cells) to be

included in the surveys, review a sample survey instrument, and development of a plan for a phased approach to sampling.

Status: This action item was discussed in the context of reviewing SP-R13. The sub-Task Force met twice in February 2002 and resolved the outstanding issues associated with the proposed survey process. See the discussion on SP-R13 for further details.

### **Study Plan Sub-Task Force Update**

Doug Rischbieter, DWR's Resource Area Manager for the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group, updated participants on the Recreation and Socioeconomics Study Plan sub-Task Force, which was organized to resolve outstanding issues associated with the survey/sampling protocol to be used in SP-R13. The collaborative effort by that group was successful in coming to a consensus of the survey/sampling methodology to be used in the relicensing study plans. Details are provided under the discussion of SP-R13 below.

### ***Study Plan R9 (Existing Recreation Use Study)***

Doug also informed the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group of additional details the Task Force added to SP-R9. The only significant change to this study plan was that four infrared counters would be used to monitor existing trail use as part of documenting existing recreation use at the project sites. The locations of the infrared counters will be coordinated with local trail user groups. In addition, there were several studies added to the list of current information in Attachment A of the study plan and the addition of the clay pit shooting area to Attachment B. The most recent version of SP-R9 was distributed to the Work Group (see Attachment 11).

The participants discussed the definition to measure recreation use that will be used in the relicensing study plans, including SP-R9. John Baas with the consulting team indicated that FERC Form 80 uses the term "recreation day", which is defined as a visit to a site for any portion of a day, as opposed to a "recreation-visitor-day" (RVD), which uses a 12-hour criteria of recreational use at a site. Some public agencies (e.g., USFS) currently use the RVD concept, but are in the process of phasing out this approach. John Cofrancesco with FERC indicated that their preference is to use "recreation day" and the Work Group agreed to use this option in the relicensing study plans. Results using the "recreation day" approach can be compared to results of studies utilizing the RVD approach through a relatively simple conversion process. One potential drawback with the "recreation day" approach is that it does not account for participation in multiple activities at the same site; however, multiple activities across project sites would be tracked. Tom Wegge with the consulting team inquired whether FERC Form 80 tracks overnight use; John Cofrancesco indicated that it does.

Participants noted the importance of SP-R9 since it will provide the baseline to measure and implement future recreational opportunities. However, one participant indicated that existing use levels might be biased downward due to the perception that existing facilities are inadequate. John Cofrancesco noted this concern, but suggested to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group that the relicensing process should be focused on future recreational needs rather than the effect of perceived inadequacies in the past on existing conditions.

The Facilitator informed the participants that the Plenary Group tentatively approved SP-R9 contingent on approval by the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group. The participants agreed to approve SP-R9. It does not need to go back to the Plenary Group.

### ***Study Plan 13 (Recreation Surveys)***

The most recent version of SP-R13 was distributed to the Work Group (see Attachment 13). As previously stated, a sub-Task Force meeting was held to resolve outstanding issues on SP-R13. One key issue was the number of groups to target in the data collection process: the number of groups targeted in this study plan has increased from four to 19. The large number of groups

results in logistical issues with timing and scheduling of the surveys. To deal with logistical issues, these groups were organized into the following categories: (1) year-round, (2) April-October, (3) Memorial Day-Labor Day, and (4) dispersed recreation. Based on the groups and seasons identified, a new table was added to the study plan that illustrates the proposed sampling schedule for the project. The sampling schedule will be refined prior to implementation. Overall, the current total target number of onsite surveys at the LOSRA for SP-R13 is in the 1,300–2,000 range.

The group discussed whether the appropriate recreation groups were identified and correctly characterized. One participant suggested that equestrians should be characterized as year-round users and that data for this group should be collected through in-person, as well as self-administered, surveys. Another change to the study plan was that individual trail user groups were changed to one all-inclusive “trail users” group based on the Department of Parks and Recreation’s (DPR) statewide decision to open trails in State Parks to multi-use activities. Anglers at Lake Oroville were also re-classified as year-round users. This study plan, including the sampling schedule, will be revised based on the reclassification of groups/seasons and resubmitted to the Plenary Group for approval. The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group approved SP-R13.

One participant asked if FERC had any comment on the DPR press release that opens State Parks trails to multi-use activities. John Cofrancesco informed the Work Group that FERC was notified of this decision and will be reviewing it for consistency with the existing FERC license. One participant expressed his disapproval of this decision including the lack of public notification and requested that this action be reviewed for proposed changes that may be included in the new recreation plan that will be developed through the relicensing process. The Facilitator suggested the discussion of consistency with a future, as yet undeveloped recreation plan is premature and while noted, should be discussed at a future meeting after first year studies are complete. The participants agreed.

### **Study Plan (review Plenary “heartburn” and revise)**

Copies of the remaining study plans scheduled for review at this meeting (SP-R1, SP-R2, SP-R6, SP-R8, SP-R11, and SP-R19) were distributed to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group (see attachments 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, and 14, respectively). The review of these study plans focused on an overview summarizing recent revisions and a discussion of any “heartburn” issues raised by the Plenary Group during their review process.

### ***Study Plan 19 (Fiscal Impacts)***

Tom Wegge, economist with the consulting team, led the discussion on SP-R19. Tom distributed and explained a handout that described the conceptual framework for study plans 18 and 19 and the linkages between these studies (see Attachment 6). It was noted that SP-R19 focused primarily on local government costs and revenues. Tom indicated it would be revised to include local fire and parks/recreation districts as special districts in the definition of local governments. He explained that this study would focus on service costs, as opposed to potential effects on the property tax base. Potential changes in tax base associated with property values will be addressed in the background report to this study plan, which will provide a historical context on this issue. One participant expressed concern regarding the treatment of government costs and who will be responsible for the cost burden of potential improvements. The Facilitator explained that this study identifies costs, not who is responsible for them, and that the project is not at the point to discuss cost allocation issues.

In response to a question by a Michael Pierce representing Butte County, Tom explained that historically displaced recreational uses would not be covered in this study. John Cofrancesco further clarified that FERC’s expects the affected environment for the study plans to reflect existing conditions only, not “pre-dam” conditions. Further, there would be no mitigation measures for impacts to pre-project conditions.

Issues raised from the Plenary Group were discussed. Resultant changes to this study plan including adding text to reflect that there will be a comparison of effects to other similar areas, that this study will use the most recent version of the County's General Plan available, and that fiscal impacts are not just associated with recreational activities. It was also clarified that data for this study would be collected back to approximately the 1980s.

The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group approved SP-R19.

***Study Plan 1 (Public and Private Vehicular Access)***

John Baas noted several global changes to this study plan, mainly associated with specific areas to be included as part of the study area. Further refinements to the study area were made based on the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group discussion; the study plan text was revised accordingly.

The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group approved SP-R1.

***Study Plan 2 (Recreation Safety Assessment)***

John Baas noted several revisions to this study plan based on comments from the Dangermond Group. One participant inquired whether the effects of "9-11" would be analyzed in this study; the Work Group was informed that emergency-type management issues, but not specifically "9-11", would be evaluated in SP-R5 (Assess Recreation Areas Management). The Facilitator indicated that there has been discussion with Rob MacKenzie regarding Butte County's issues related to law enforcement and staffing to maintain accessibility to project recreation features and he was satisfied the study plans would collect the necessary information. Further refinements to the study area were made based on the discussion.

The discussion subsequently focused on health/safety issues associated with multi-use trails. It was suggested that this study should look at comparable locations, utilize project surveys, and review the DPR Statewide survey to evaluate health and safety effects from multi-use trails.

John Cofrancesco also informed the Work group that FERC has existing regulations regarding safety at hydroelectric facilities and that FERC inspectors may potentially be used as a resource in this study.

It was further clarified that this study plan will not address water quality, which will be evaluated in another study plan led by another work group.

The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group approved SP-R2.

***Study Plan 6 (ADA Accessibility Assessment)***

The participants were informed that the Plenary Group had no "heartburn" issues with SP-R6. Only minor changes have been made to Attachment A. One participant stated that there are disabled equestrian users using project facilities; this statement has been noted.

The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group approved SP-R6.

***Study Plan 8 (Carrying Capacity Study)***

The participants were informed that the Plenary Group had no "heartburn" issues with SP-R8. Several minor additions to the study area for this study plan were made based on input from the Work Group. One participant expressed the desire to know the true carrying capacity of project areas so that specific areas may retain their quiet and primitive nature; John Baas responded that this is one of the objectives of this study plan.

The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group approved SP-R8.

### ***Study Plan 11 (Recreation and Public Use Impact Assessment)***

The same global changes related to study area were made to this study plan. John Cofrancesco asked what the difference is between SP-R11 and SP-R8. John Baas replied that SP-R11 is specific to recreation issues and would feed information into SP-R8. Revisions were made to appropriately cross-reference this study to SP-W3. Additional text was added that indicates this study will evaluate impacts to vegetation from trail use, erosion impacts associated with fuel-load management activities and trail maintenance, and air quality/fugitive dust impacts. One participant suggested that cultural resources be added to Attachment A to this study plan; it was added, but it was also noted that the staff working on this study will not be experts and that cultural resource experts will be evaluating the project area as part of other study plans. The participants affirmed the need for inter-Work Group coordination.

The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group approved SP-R11.

### **Next Steps**

The Facilitator distributed the revised 2002 Plenary Group and Work Group meeting schedule (see Attachment 15). The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group agreed to the next meeting date/time:

Date: Tuesday, March 26, 2002  
Time: 6:00 to 10:00 PM  
Location: Kelly Ridge Golf Course Meeting Room

John Baas indicated that there might be the need for Study Plan Task Force meetings to further revise study plans before the next Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group meeting; however, no meeting dates/times have been set at that point.

### **Agreements Made**

1. The Work Group agreed to utilize the “recreation day” methodology in the relicensing study plans, as preferred by FERC, and defined as a visit to a site by one person for any portion of a day.
2. The Facilitator informed the participants that the Plenary Group tentatively approved SP-R9, SP-R13, SP-R1, SP-R2, SP-R6, SP-R8, SP-R11, and SP-R19 based on the approval by the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group. Subsequently, the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group agreed to approve SP-R9, SP-R13, SP-R1, SP-R2, SP-R6, SP-R8, SP-R11, and SP-R19.

### **Action Items**

The following list of action items identified by the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group includes a description of the action, the participant responsible for the action, and item status.

**Action Item #R44:** Hold Task Force meetings to review and revise remaining Study Plans.  
**Responsible:** Study Plan Task Force  
**Due Date:** March 26, 2002